MONSANTO LATIN AMERICA SOUTH
SAP® CONSULTING DELIVERS PLATFORM MIGRATION WITH NO INTERRUPTION TO BUSINESS

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Guillermo Elizeche, IT Project Leader, Monsanto Latin America South

QUICK FACTS

Company
- Name: Monsanto Latin America South
- Headquarters: Buenos Aires, Argentina
- Industry: Chemicals
- Products and services: Crop and vegetable seeds, crop protection products
- Revenue: Around US$11.37 billion (Monsanto Company – global)
- Employees: 21,700 (global)
- Web site: www.monsanto.com
- Implementation partner: SAP® Consulting organization

Challenges and Opportunities
- Migrate to global corporate platform with no business interruption
- Provide self-service reporting to business users

Objectives
- Install business intelligence solution with extended capabilities
- Preserve legacy-based reports

SAP Solutions and Services
- SAP BusinessObjects™ portfolio
- SAP NetWeaver® Business Warehouse component
- SAP Consulting services

Implementation Highlights
- Good coordination between global Monsanto headquarters, local IT staff, and SAP Consulting
- Extensive knowledge transfer, enabling rapid self-sufficiency

Why SAP
- Compliance with new global corporate standard of using SAP software
- Lower maintenance costs versus local solution; more flexible functionality
- Risk mitigation via SAP Consulting services
- The SAP consultants' expertise and understanding of software and integration needs versus other vendors

Benefits
- New flexibility for user self-service and customized reports
- Smooth, uninterrupted transition to new platform
- Cost reductions via migration to shared corporate platform

Existing Environment
- MicroStrategy for business intelligence
- Homegrown data warehouse on Oracle platform

Third-Party Integration
- Database: Oracle
- Hardware: Dell
- Operating system: Microsoft Windows

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SAP Customer Success Story
Chemicals

SAP

Monsanto Latin America South (Monsanto LAS) faced a big challenge. When its corporate parent in St. Louis chose to implement the SAP NetWeaver® Business Warehouse (SAP NetWeaver BW) component worldwide, the Buenos Aires, Argentina–based unit had to migrate from its own business warehouse and business intelligence platform to align with the new global standard. Crucially, Monsanto LAS had to ensure that, during the transition, there would be no interruption to the flow of some 200 reports it depended on to run its business – so it called in the SAP® Consulting organization.

SAP Consulting first worked with Monsanto LAS to link its local business intelligence (BI) solution with the SAP NetWeaver BW installation in St. Louis. Then, to help ensure tighter integration with SAP NetWeaver BW and add enhancements for user self-service, the two partners decided to implement the SAP BusinessObjects™ portfolio as Monsanto LAS' new BI solution, integrating it with the globally hosted instance of SAP NetWeaver BW in St. Louis.

SAP Consulting worked with Monsanto LAS to replicate some 200 reports from its previous system in SAP BusinessObjects. It transferred its solution knowledge in SAP BusinessObjects to the Monsanto LAS IT team members so they could train business users to produce queries on their own and generate customized reports. SAP Consulting also took responsibility for all technical tasks – migrating the legacy data to SAP BusinessObjects, installing drivers and connectors to link SAP BusinessObjects with the St. Louis servers hosting SAP NetWeaver BW, and training the local IT team in Argentina to maintain the new landscape.

"The great benefit of using SAP Consulting is that you feel confident it can do a quality job and help you avoid any risk of business interruption during implementation," says Guillermo Elizeche, IT project leader at Monsanto LAS. "SAP Consulting has great expertise, even at the junior levels; the consultants know what they are doing. They are very focused on their jobs and are very customer oriented. Our analysts and the SAP consultants made a great team."

The project came at a particularly critical time, as it was completed during the global financial meltdown that began in 2008. That made the cost savings even more crucial. "We achieved great cost reduction because we moved from a local solution – locally maintained, with a high cost of licensing, consulting, and maintenance – to the corporate servers in St. Louis," Elizeche says. "Now our platform is housed in the same building as the other corporate applications, and we share the costs as part of the overall agreement between Monsanto and SAP."

In addition to the cost savings, the uninterrupted flow of information and new self-service reporting have helped Monsanto LAS cope more effectively with the challenging economic environment. Elizeche says, "The enhanced reporting options in SAP BusinessObjects have provided a great benefit to our sales team, because they are now able to access information in many different ways. We have created more than 100 different custom reports on our own that let us drill down into sales data by product, customer, region, and point of sale. This allows us to adapt and refine our sales strategies and generate cross-selling opportunities to improve margins and generate additional revenue."

Monsanto LAS Depends on Reports

Monsanto LAS includes Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay. The Argentine operation is responsible for information delivery to all these countries, including sales forecasts; order and billing information; and delivery reports extracted from the global SAP ERP application, the local customer relationship management application, and other solutions. Report recipients include key users in sales and marketing, financial analysts, and personnel responsible for credit and collection services and customer operations.

Previously, Monsanto LAS pulled information from SAP ERP databases into an intermediate repository connected to a local data warehouse. Monsanto's corporate team decided to retire that system to gain the benefits of a single global standard.

Monsanto LAS picked SAP Consulting for the mission-critical assignment. "The main reason we chose SAP Consulting was because we needed to minimize risk," Elizeche says. "We wanted to work with the consulting arm of the same company that provided the solution. We wanted a quick response in case something did not work as intended, and SAP Consulting was the only organization capable of providing that."

SAP Consulting Duplicates, Extends Reporting

The Monsanto LAS project team was composed of a project leader, a business intelligence specialist, an SAP NetWeaver BW developer, and a developer for the ABAP® programming language. SAP Consulting provided its own full-time project leader and three SAP BusinessObjects technical analysts.

The main deliverable was 50 "publications." Each publication is comprised of either a single report or a group of reports, some 200 in total. "On a periodic basis – daily, weekly, or monthly – specific reports are automatically generated and accessible to users through a Web interface on our intranet," Elizeche says. "The users can enter the portal and grab PDFs, Microsoft Excel documents, or HTML files. For instance, sales reps enter the portal and check sales data for their zone. A publication might include up to three to five individual reports."

SAP Consulting duplicated these reports in the new platform. "The fact that we changed the entire platform was invisible to users," Elizeche says. But now, the users have new capabilities. They can get information faster and in the form they want it, enabling them to make

report schedules and mode of delivery, such as by e-mail, and so forth. This has been so successful that, only one month after implementation, our users generated 50 new reports. And many of these reports are complex, information-rich documents."

He credits SAP Consulting for this success. "SAP Consulting not only replicated the reporting structure from the previous platform, but it also showed us how SAP BusinessObjects provides an enhanced platform for user-generated and flexible reporting," Elizeche says. "SAP Consulting played a fundamental role in our success – first through the report migration and then by transferring knowledge on how to use the new tools."

Monsanto LAS Now Tackles Projects on Its Own

Monsanto LAS is now working on three new SAP BusinessObjects projects – one for its grain trade operations, another for measuring POS metrics, and a third for sales orders, billing, deliveries, and collections. And, although Elizeche hopes to work with SAP Consulting again, he is proud to say he won't be needing its services this time. "The SAP Consulting knowledge transfer during the engagement was a major factor in allowing us to take on these new initiatives ourselves," Elizeche says.

The global team from Monsanto's St. Louis corporate headquarters included a part-time leader experienced in SAP NetWeaver BW, two SAP NetWeaver BW developers working on demand, and one senior SAP BusinessObjects technical analyst. "We coordinated the overall effort in Argentina, SAP Consulting provided the expertise in SAP BusinessObjects, and Monsanto corporate in St. Louis was responsible for the SAP NetWeaver BW expertise," Elizeche says.

quicker and better business decisions in their areas of responsibility.

Says Elizeche, "The main difference is that users can create their own reports using SAP BusinessObjects Web Intelligence® software. The old platform was not user friendly and was understood only by a few business experts; this constraint has been eliminated. Now anyone in the company can generate reports – they can easily change the layout and fields and specify the

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